

further underscores this irrational judgment by the DHS. Not only is DHS taking money away from the Nation's largest and most populated city, while another recent terror plot against New York came to light just last week, but its antiterrorism database listed the States of Indiana and Wisconsin with more potential terrorist targets than New York.

This New Yorker finds it painfully ironic that the DHS said that one of the reasons for the cut in funding is our lack of landmarks necessary to protect New York. Well, if that statement is not illogical enough, consider this. Among the items in its National Asset Database that the DHS does find necessary are a petting zoo in Alabama, a popcorn factory in Indiana, and Mule Day. And here is a picture of the Mule Day Parade in Tennessee.

As a New Yorker, it is certainly fair to question the rationale for our funding reduction if these are the priorities in other States which are receiving New York's money instead.

VOTING RIGHTS ACT

(Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, over 51 years ago this month, President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act. America is a better country because of the Voting Rights Act.

The right to vote is the most fundamental thing our American citizens have to participate fully in American democracy. The Voting Rights Act is our Nation's most crucial and critical civil rights victory. The law commemorates the lives of those who marched, died and participated that we all might be better Americans and live and vote in the democracy that we love.

It is important today, as we debate the Voting Rights Act, that America pay particular attention. This law was good then, this law is good now, and it is needed for our future so that Americans might rise up and live in God's best interest.

Remember, today, urge your colleagues, call your Congressperson, tell them to vote to reauthorize the Voting Rights Act for 25 more years.

COMPETITION LOWERS HEALTH CARE COSTS

(Mr. MURPHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, did you know that a 25-year-old male in good health can purchase a policy for health insurance for \$960 in Kentucky and the same policy costs about \$5,800 in New Jersey? Did you know that a policy priced at \$1,600 in Iowa is \$2,600 in Washington State? And did you know

that that same policy costs about \$4,000 in Massachusetts?

One reason for this disparity is that families have little or no choice when it comes to selecting health care insurance. Where there is no competition, there is very little that drives cost down. Each State has its own health insurance mandates, and some of them are good, but there are about 1,800 of them all across the Nation, including provisions for acupuncturists, massage therapists, and hair replacements.

Many of these mandates may be helpful, but when you add up the cost, they can put health care out of the reach of families. Congress should establish a trial program allowing consumers and families to purchase health insurance policies from other States. Let us give families a choice instead of more costs.

I urge my colleagues to learn more about competition in health insurance by looking at my Web site at Murphy.house.gov. America needs us to go to work on this.

U.S. PEACE AND DIPLOMACY

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, nearly 4 years ago, this administration came before us and promoted their idea of peace and democracy in the Middle East. Their vehicle for accomplishing this? A unilateral first strike against Iraq and the subsequent occupation.

Let us reflect on this policy this morning. In Iraq, over 2,500 American soldiers have died, tens of thousands injured, over 100,000 innocent Iraqi civilians killed, and countless injured. We are mired in a civil war there, and violence is growing every day.

In Iran, international efforts at diplomacy have been undermined by our Iraq policy. This administration seems determined to repeat the disaster of Iraq in Iran, most recently by trying to link Iran to the attacks on Israel.

As a broader regional war breaks out between Israel and Lebanon, spurred on by Hezbollah, instead of trying to find ways to end the conflict by rescuing negotiations between the Palestinians and Israel, this administration, which has an unfortunate talent for war, is making statements which will contribute to escalation.

Israel urgently needs diplomatic assistance. The only way the U.S. can reclaim its role as a mediator is to speak and act like a mediator. You can bomb the world to pieces, but you can't bomb the world to peace.

LONE STAR VOICE: MARIBETH BURGESS RAY

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, our individual heritage of the past is important, but

our future as Americans is more important. Many Americans trace their past through Ellis Island. Mrs. Maribeth Burgess Ray of Baytown, Texas, recently went there, and she says:

"While at Ellis Island, I found a profound statement. An article had a picture of a mother and her two sons. The newcomers' attire was that of the country from which they had fled. The statement was, 'If the ones who flee do not change their appearance and speech, they only bring what they fled from to America, thus changing America into the country that they were fleeing from.'"

Today, we forget what America is and what it stands for. If what you are fleeing from is so bad, leave it behind and adapt to what it is you are looking for. Let us keep America America, with the beautiful quilt of immigrants that make it up, but let us not turn America into something it is not. Don't let our borders be penetrated by the baggage that some refuse to leave behind.

Mr. Speaker, people who come to America should assimilate and just become Americans.

And that's just the way it is.

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MULTILINGUAL BALLOTS

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, when I was born, my grandparents could not express themselves in the constitutional right to vote. Today we have an opportunity to affirm the very basic values of America, and that is to reaffirm every American's right to vote without barrier or bar.

And so I rise to explain the King amendment which has given the wrong impression, and that is the amendment that would eliminate multilingual ballots for citizens. I ask my good friend what he would do for the young soldier who is an immigrant, who is a legal permanent resident and has offered his life in battle in Iraq and Afghanistan and who has managed to make legal permanent residents and then citizens of his own family who have a language barrier because of just recently coming to this country, maybe conversant enough to become citizens, but not enough to read a ballot.

This amendment is unconstitutional and un-American, and I hope that we will together, Republicans and Democrats, uphold the values of America.

SICK ATTEMPT TO RAISE CAMPAIGN CASH

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, politics unfortunately, can be